1: Cunningham G-3 (1846-47) 1854 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4



264 repeated in the middle of the day, with any fruits that
565 may be in season,—apples, grapes, and apricots, or with the last dried. In the evening they usually have rice, and broth of turnips, or of sheep or goat mutton, for
262 since the occupation of the country by the Hindu
784 Dogras, Yak's flesh is no longer to be had in Northern Ladák. Even in the British district of Spiti, the Yak is now a sacred animal, as our Government have made over the district to the Hindu raja of Bisahar.

● 273 All classes are exceedingly fond of spirituous liquors, although they have nothing better than their own indigenous *Chang*. This is made from fermented barley and wheat flour, and has a most disagreeable sour smell, like that of bad beer, and a thick appearance like dirty gruel. This is the usual beverage; but it is sometimes distilled, by which process a clear spirit is obtained, something like whiskey, but of a most villanous flavour.

## VI.—SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

595 The most remarkable social institution of the Botis is
565 the system of polyandry, which is strictly confined to brothers. Each family of brothers has only one wife in common. The most usual number of husbands is two, but three and even four husbands are not uncommon. This system prevails of course only among the poorer classes, for the rich, as in all eastern countries, generally have two or three wives, according to their circumstances. Polyandry is the principal check to the increase of population, and however revolting it may be to our feelings, it was a most politic measure for a poor country which does not produce sufficient food for its inhabitants.

1: Cunningham G-3 (1846-47) 1854 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4



The Botis are very social people in their habits, and every event is made the pretext for a feast, which usually ends in great uproariousness, and frequently in general drunkenness. Huge bowls of *Chang* form the chief attraction of an entertainment, and the song* and the laugh abound, until the liquor is finished. On these occasions they prefer merry or drinking songs. The singer is often accompanied by a fiddler, and sometimes by a drum. Exhibitions of female dancers frequently form a principal part of an entertainment; but the performers are more remarkable for their costume than for their graceful movements. The principal occasions on which these entertainments are held, are births, marriages, and deaths. The ceremonies are the following:

The birth-feast, *Tsas-Ton*, is held one week after the mother's confinement, when all the relatives assemble at her house to celebrate the child's birth. All the guests make presents to the mother, according to their means, of pieces of cloth and food, and occasionally of money. The party then dines, and the entertainment ends with a bowl of chang. The mother remains at home for one month.

The naming-feast, *Ming-Ton*, which answers to our christening, is held just one year after the birth. The child is then taken before some great lama, to whom an offering is made of a rupee or a quantity of wheat or barley, according to the means of the parties. The lama pronounces a name, and the relatives retire to the usual entertainment of dinner and chang.

The marriage-feast, *Bag-Ton*, is a much more formal business. When betrothed, the bridegroom proceeds to

* A drinking-song is appropriately called *Chang-gLu*, a "liquor-song."

583 DOWER--rinto or zho or in the case of Mahomedans "mehr." The sum of money paid by the bridegroom to the father or other nearest male relative of the bride. The goods given to a woman on her marriage, including what we should call her "trousseau," and "dot" is called "raktak".

534 DRUM--denjang the big drum--body of wood and played upon like our big drums; dolti a brass drum like a kettle drum; daman a kettle drum; daps a drum played with the hands like a tambourine; daroo a very peculiar little drum used by lámas when dancing. It is shaped like an hour-glass and held in the centre, short strings with small pieces of wood attached to their ends are fastened on at either end; and when the hand is shaken these pieces of wood come in contact with the parchment heads of the drum, and thus sound it. There being several strings at each end, the sound produced is rather that of a rattle than of a drum. Denjang (or dolti, etc.,) rdung ches to play the drum.

[792]

● 273 DRUNKARD--rárospa or ráros or rároskhan. The Ladákis can not be called drunkards. They all drink chhang very freely, and frequently get very cheery in consequence, but even in their cups they are usually good tempered and harmless. They seldom get dead drunk. The expression zeekopkop chha ches signifies to be fuddled, or partially intoxicated.

439 [35]DYE--tshos the durable dyes of the country, rang the bright,
386 but not fast, dyes imported from India.

136 EAGLE--lák. The Chinese or Lhasa pug dogs are called "lák khee"
825 because it is believed that if a human being lays hands upon a young eagle, when freshly hatched, the bird is transformed into a dog of the Chinese pug breed.

291 EAR FLAP--hnaslan or noslan. The woollen lappets worn by Ladáki women over their ears. In shape and size they resemble the blinkers worn by a carriage horse. They are edged with fur and are plaited into the hair.

731 EARTHQUAKE--samgul. Ladákis think that the earth is supported,
823 in the midst of an ocean, on the back of a large fish, and that whenever this fish rolls about, earthquakes are felt. In LADAK THEY ARE ALMOST UNKNOWN.

[i.e, BARLEY BEER -- ANALYST]

789 [95]MAGIC--thrul (or thul) stan ches (to perform in a general sense) thoosna giap ches(to bring down fire from heaven to consume any thing) nganchhos cho ches (to bewitch, by means of religious charms, etc.), reepSHing or teepSHing (a magical wand-made of a very rare kind of wood, and possessing the virtue of enabling the person holding it, to become invisible).

795 609 MAHOMEDAN--pheepa or Mussalman. The word "pheepa" means "outsider" and is applicable to all persons other than Buddhists, who are called "nangpa" or "insider," but as a matter of fact, Muhammadans are the only persons usually called "pheepa," and the word may therefore be considered as applying to them only.

583 601 MAKPA--Makpa. This is the name given to the husband of a woman who is sufficiently well off to select a husband for herself, instead of being married in the ordinary way. For particulars see under heading "Husband."

412 [96]MALLET--thómálak (iron hammer as for driving in tent pegs) thóa (large sledge hammer) chhombur (the heavy wooden beaters used in Ladák for consolidating new metal on a road or newly laid turf, etc.)

●273 MALT--lums. In Ladák, barley (nas) required for malt is cleaned and put into a large cooking pot to a depth of 6 or 8 inches and water is then poured over it, to a depth of about 3 inches. The whole is then boiled gently till the water is absorbed by the barley which is then called "Lums."

The Lums is then taken out of the boiling pan and spread out to cool, after which it is sprinkled with a mixture of powdered ginger cloves and nutmeg, a little yeast (phaps) is also added. The whole is then mixed up and put into a sack, and covered up to keep out the cold.

In about 60 hours it ferments, it is then put into a large earthen vessel for about 18 hours during which time it rises, water is then added, and after 2 hours is drawn off and strained. This is the best kind of "chhang" (beer) and is called "machhoo." After this, water is three times more added and drawn off and strained. The resulting liquors are then mixed up together and sold as "chhang," which is a kind of small bees not much appreciated by foreigners, but constitutint the national drink of the people of Ladak.

appreciated by foreigners, but constituting the national drink of 273 ●
the people of Ladák.

[97]MARRIAGE--pakston or respectfully skoobak. After the "be- 584
trothal" ceremony (see Betrothal) has been performed, a month
or two is usually allowed to elapse before the wedding takes
place, though sometimes a year or more passes between the
time of betrothal and the time of marriage. When a day has
been fixed for the marriage, the procedure is as follows:--

On the day fixed, the relatives (nien) of the bride (pakma) assemble 585
at the bride's house, and those of the bridegroom (pakpho) at
the bridegroom's house. At night-fall the bridegroom goes
with from 5 to 7 of his friends (ngiópa) to the bride's house,
he finds the outer door (giázGHo) of the yard (stárá) shut, and
guarded by male relatives of the bride, he gives a few rupees
to them and they then allow him to enter, but when passing be-
tween this gate and the door leading into the house itself
(giázGHoi nángkuk) he is surrounded by the bride's female
relatives, who pretend to be very angry, and beat him with
small sticks. To these also the bridegroom has to give a few
rupees, and he is then allowed to enter the house. The bride-
groom, with his friends, is then feasted by the bride's relatives,
but the bride does not appear. Much "chhang" drinking,
music and dancing is indulged in, till about 1 or 2 o'clock the
next morning, when the best man (ngiátheetpa or ngiáthritpa)
accompanied by some of the older male relatives of the bride-
groom, goes to the kitchen (mákhang) in company with the
parents and relatives of the bride. The bridegroom and the
rest of his party do not go to the kitchen.

The guests take their seats in the kitchen and each one puts his
drinking cup (korey) on the ground in front of him and "chhang'
is then handed round by a male relative of the bride's, accom-
panied by one of female relatives, who has a stick in one hand.
The latter takes up the cup of each guest in turn and fills it,
and if the guest fails to drink freely, she beats him. This cere-
mony is called "nanchhang" or "insistance chhang." During
this time a ceremony known as "thóhloo" is taking place, it is
enacted by two old men, one being a relative of the bride and
the other a relative of the bridegroom. First the relative of
the bride gets up and sings a sonnet in praise of the bridegroom;
the other old man must then get up and reply, by singing a

687 567 476 failed to account for, State grain or money, etc., in their charge. Such a debtor was, and is still, termed a "bákidár" or "defaulter." Such persons, and their descendants, were, till the year 1890, [148] obliged to work for the State in return for their daily ration only, the rest of their earnings being confiscated by the State, as part payment of the original default.

164 757 SMALL-POX--dumpa or drumpa. Small-pox is rare in Ladak, but in the summer of 1834 it broke out with great virulence, and is said to have carried off about 14,000 persons, or one-twelfth of the entire population. The Tibetan custom in regard to this disease is to take the patient away to some secluded spot, to give him a few days' supply of food and drink, and then to leave him to take his chance of recovering.

601 [149] SON--pootsa.

774 SOUL--sem (soul); SHok or srok or tshey (life); hning or sning (heart). In the Roman Catholic Tibetan catechism the word "soul" is translated "namSHes" which in Ladák is understood to mean the "ghost" of a dead person. But see "Spirit."

241 SOW TO--sáwan (or sáon) tap ches (to follow the plough and throw seed into the newly-made furrow); sáwan giástor táng ches (to scatter seed and then plough it in). The latter is the procedure followed by the very poorest agriculturalists in Ladák.

[150]

774 776 787 273 SPIRIT--sem (the soul); SHok or srok or tshey (the life); hning or sning (the heart); tun (energy); namSHes or namSHet (a ghost); thukngyid (the Holy Ghost); sem or thuks (as the spirit of an action or speech, etc); hla or hloo (a god or fairy); hlámo (a goddess); hlandey or hlandrey or dey or drey (a demon or evil spirit or phantom); ghegs and rdon and hnotchet (evil spirits); gongpo (the spirit with which a man may be "possessed"); árak (an alchoholic drink); chut (the alchoholic essence).

516 [151] SQUAT TO--duk ches (general); tsong-tsong-la duk ches (as a Hindustani sits on the upright calves of his legs); pugdong (or pigrdong) tsukstey duk ches (as Central Asians sit, in a kneeling position, but sitting back on the up-turned heels); trupzheel-dakstey (or tubzhildakstey) duk ches (cross-legged like a tailor).

their work inside and near the house. The mother of the owner of the house, the good Tsering Putrid, and the owner's sister, are busily occupied at the stove, which is in the same room, in order to serve the red-cowled men with food and drink. They are continually pouring butter-tea with a ladle from a large copper pot into the little drinking bowls placed on the tables in front of the monks. With that the lamas are eating fried barley flour (tsampa), which they knead themselves with their fingers in the bowls into a dough (kollag) by mixing it with the tea; as well as flat cakes baked without yeast and made with the flour of wheat. Towards evening the lamas receive another plentiful meal with mutton and vegetables. With it they drink barley beer (chang) /13/ which they heartily enjoy, as they do the meat, in spite of the interdict of the monastic rule. In order to expiate the guilt which they incur by eating the meat and with it the shared guilt of killing an animal, they add a special prayer to the customary prayer after dinner. After they have prayed from themselves and all their people in all six levels of existence, that they may never be separated from the "Three Jewels" (Buddha, the Law, and Monkhood), and that they may all some day attain to the dignity of Buddha, they add another request that the sheep that has been killed may be reborn in heaven. In this manner the members of the "sacred community of monks" appease their consciences and do not let any grey hair grow on their cleanly shaved heads over the matter. After all they have not killed any sheep with their own hand, so that the responsibility for killing lies with others.

789 [262] [273] [783]

But what is the purpose of this ceremony which lasts an entire day? In the house of Lobsang Wanggyal there is expected the arrival of an heir to the family in the very near future. It will undoubtedly be a boy. The onpo, the soothsayer and astrologist in neighboring Lamayuru, has definitely assured the happy "expectant father" of this. The onpo, after all, is the one to know. He has read it from the stars and from his complicated tables, and he has calculated it that way, something which only such a clever man as the onpo can do.

[787]

Now the life of the Tibetan is menaced even before his entrance into this world of woe, as it is throughout the entire time of his stay on earth, by thousands upon thousands of evil spirits of the most varied kinds. The first to approach the child which is about to be born, in this its earliest stage of life, and which approach it with treacherous intent, are the 100,000 child demons. These must be exorcised, for from them the developing human being is threatened with the 24

[776]

/53/

# DROGPA NAMGYAL'S WEDDING

## THE SEARCH FOR A BRIDE AND MATCH-MAKING

### Discussions About Arrangements

"Beers"

Namgyal was now almost one and a half year cycles (18 years) old, and as such he had long since entered the marriageable age, according to the conception of the peoples of the East. He could have married three or four years earlier, but in the Dragshos house early marriage was not favored. Namgyal had taken a liking to pretty Trashi Rolma from the neighboring house of the Pahnpa. They had grown up and played together, had driven the goats into the mountains and gathered wood for fuel together; they had met almost every day in the village or in the field, and it seemed arranged between the two even without many words that they would some day become man and wife. So, too, thought many wise women of the neighborhood. But they hadn't reckoned with the host, that is to say the p'as-pun, the close relatives, and above all grandmother Tsering Putrid. They had quite different plans. 581

One evening in late autumn, after the wheat harvest had been brought in, the grain had been threshed and stored away in the granary, and, at a moment when there was time for such matters, the family council came together to discuss this important matter. Aside from the parents and the grandmother there were also gathered together two uncles who likewise belonged to the p'as-pun as well as a few other men from the neighborhood, members of the tribe. Amid the expenditure of many words and much beer (chang) (27) they discussed the problem /54/

27. The Tibetans brew a beer (chang, ĉan) from barley which is boiled, whereupon a leaven (p'abs) is added to the extract. After the fluid has fermented it gives off a somewhat sour beer which has an intoxicating effect. [273]

of whom Namgyal should marry. He himself was not consulted in this argument.

At first Namgyal's mother, Palskyid, risked a timid attempt to support his marriage to Trashi Rolma. She contended that she was a good girl and that no one could say anything bad about her; that she was

585 Late into the afternoon everybody gives himself over to the enjoyment of what is served. A moment which everyone awaits with tense anticipation is that when the large wedding cake (abran-rgyas) is taken apart. Two men from the tribe of the Chirpon see to this matter. The first "tile" is thrown in a wide arc over the heads of the bystanders, as an offering to the gods. The dogs and crows who have long been waiting for this moment again receive the offering greedily. Then the tsampa tiles are distributed among the guests and those that may be left over are handed out to the poor who have come to the wedding in great numbers. At this occasion fighting again takes place.

[562] The beer is eagerly consumed by the men. Ceaselessly women go through the rows and pour beer into the drinking bowls before they are quite emptied. The women have no time to sit down with the men and to feast and amuse themselves with them. Nor is this customary. It is their duty to wait upon the men. Lady Deskyid, the mother of the bride, supervises the cooking and distribution of the food and the drinks in the chansa above and in the courtyard below. The women of the circle of relatives and of the clan look after the serving and the many matters that must be attended to at such a large wedding. In between they may occasionally find a few minutes to spare for eating mouthfuls, drinking a bowl of tea and above all for prattling.

• [273] A few women armed with osier switches go around between the drinking men, and whenever they find that a man is not drinking a proper amount of beer they give him a few blows on his back amid joking words. This is the drinking enforcement (nan-can). Moderate drinking is considered detrimental to the happiness of the betrothed couple.

585 533 539 In between, individual men sing songs. Thus a young man from Kalatse first sang the song of the "secret love"; it was said that secretly he had been in love with the daughter of the Chirpon.

/98/ Up yonder on the green slope
There blooms a lovely little flower.
Listen, you boy!
It blooms forth beautifully.
Listen, you boy!
Pick the little flower,
Oh you boy!
Pick the lovely one and guard it well!

6: Gazetteer G-5 (ca. 1840-1883) 1883-4 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4



Chapter III, B. Social and Religious Life.

Láhaul. The furniture in a Spiti house has a general resemblance to that in a Láhaul one, but tubs and pails, the woodwork of which comes from Basáhir, are much used, and the churn for beating up the tea with salt and butter is never missing.

Food.

The Spiti men buy old cattle from the Láhaulis, and slaughter them in the autumn to furnish the larder for the six months of winter. In Láhaul cattle are not slaughtered now-a-days (except perhaps in some villages at the head of the Bhága valley, and there it is done with the greatest secrecy); but five or six sheep are killed in each house at the beginning of the winter: the flesh dries, and will then keep good for any number of years: the older the meat, the greater the delicacy to the taste of a Láhauli. The principal food of the Láhauli is buck-wheat, boiled whole and eaten as gruel, or roasted and made into flour, which is then baked into cakes or mixed with *cháng* beer, and formed into dumplings. Parched barely-flour made into porridge is the every-day food in Spiti. It is also eaten boiled with butter and green herbs into a kind of soup; wheaten-flour is generally eaten in this way in Láhaul. Butter and butter-milk are regular articles of diet in both countries. *Cháng*, a kind of beer brewed from rice and barley, is drunk generally, and tea and a kind of whisky by those who can afford it. All the people of Láhaul will eat sheep that have died a natural death; and Dágis (Lehri) Lehaís and Barárars will eat dead cows and bullocks; but it is said that the Hesis will not. Green food is never cultivated, though many wild plants and herbs are eaten as vegetables. Potatoes were introduced by the missionaries and are now grown in considerable quantity.

Dress of Láhaul and Spiti.

In Spiti the ordinary dress of the men consists of a skull-cap, a long loose frock or coat of thick woollen cloth girt in at the waist by a long and broad sash, and a pair of boots, with leathern soles and cloth tops reaching to and gathered below the knee. Some who can afford it wear also a silk or cotton under-coat; the coat is generally the natural colour of the wool; the other articles are red, or red and black. Every man wears a loose necklace of rough lumps of turquoise, amber, and other stones mixed with coral beads. A bright iron pipe and a knife in sheath are stuck in his belt, from which hang also by steel chains his *chakmak*, or flint and steel, and tinder-box, a metal spoon, and a bunch of the most fantastically shaped keys. In the fold of his coat next the skin he carries a wooden or metal drinking cup, a tobacco pouch, some parched barley-meal, and other odds and ends. Many wear their hair plaited into a tail like Chinamen. If of a serious tone (a professing Buddhist, to adopt a phrase used among some Christians), he will never go out without a prayer-wheel in one hand, and a religious book or two slung on his back, and repeats the *Om máni* at every pause in the conversation. The monks, when not engaged in religious functions, go bare-headed, and wear a rosary of beads* instead of a necklace: the cut of their coat and boots is the same, but the cloth is dyed either red or yellow. Astrologers dress in red from head to foot. The women wear a coat, sash, and boots like the men, but the coat is always of a dark colour; they also wear

* These beads are sometimes bits of a human skull, on the *memento mori* principle.

6: Gazetteer G-5 (ca. 1840-1883) 1883-4 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4





142 [152] [44] 157

the face is always marked with lines and wrinkles. In fact, none of them can be said to be handsome, and the old women are quite hideous; the only redeeming point is the look of honesty and smiling good humour to be recognized in almost every countenance. In those parts of Láhaul in which there is most admixture of Hindú blood, the blending of the two types is very clearly distinguishable.

General character of the people of Láhaul and Spiti.

Mr. Lyall thus describes the character of the people of Láhaul and Spiti:—

"The character of the people is solid and conservative; their power of united action is considerable, as will be seen from the description I have given of the arrangements in force with regard to *begár* and common expenses; they seem to me not quick-witted, but eminently shrewd and sensible. Though they show great respect to their hereditary nobles and headmen, they would, I believe, combine at once to resist tyranny or infringement of custom on their part. The headmen have certainly been hitherto very careful not to offend public opinion. They have few ideas in respect of manners; when holding a court or a meeting, I have often seen the whole assembly burst into a roar of laughter on my making a mistake in the language of a ludicrous character, and a man would fill and light his pipe under my nose on similar occasions without thinking of asking leave. But these same people answered all my questions very carefully, and carried out my orders with great fidelity. Murder, theft, or violent assaults are almost unknown among them,* and they seem to me to be fair, and often kind, in their dealings with each other; on the other hand, I agree with Mr. Heyde in considering the standard of sobriety and chastity among them to be exceptionally low. Drinking is a common vice in all cold countries, and the want of chastity is accounted for by the custom of polyandry in Láhaul, and of celibacy of younger sons in Spiti, which leave a large proportion of the women in both countries unmarried all their lives. In spite of these two frailties the Botis seem to me (like the Scotch country people, who are also subject to them) to be an eminently religious race; they seem to think that to withstand these particular temptations is to be a saint, and that in ordinary men who do not aim so high, to succumb is quite venial. The lives of their saints are full of the most austere acts of virtue and mortification of the flesh commencing from the cradle, which are certainly calculated to make the ordinary mortal abandon the task of imitation in despair; and their religion, though it fails here, has, in my opinion, considerable influence for good in their minds in other respects; more at least than the forms of religion practised by other races, Hindú or Muhammadan, have at the present day in the parts of Hindústan with which I am acquainted. This is not surprising, as the moral teaching to be found in the Buddhist books is of a very high kind: the love of one's neighbour is one of its principles, and this is extended to include even the brute creation. So, again, though good works are balanced against sins, yet their worthlessness, when not done in a humble and reverent spirit, is recognised. In regard to veracity I have found them superior to Hindús; in hearing law

[674] [273] [83]

177 685

* Of late years the people of lower Pattan, in Láhaul, have got a character for picking and stealing from merchandize in their hands as carriers; but they are a race apart, of mixed blood and religion, descended for the most part from criminals from other countries, who took refuge here from justice in former days. Besides they have been demoralised lately by opportunity and impunity.

brothers," go, if possible on horseback, to the bride's house in order to buy the bride for the bridegroom. The bride's relatives will not admit them until they have proved their honorable descent by answering a long series of questions addressed to them in the form of songs. As soon as an answer has been given incorrectly, the inhabitants of the house, who are armed with osier twigs, rain blows on the seven men. The songs used on this occasion represent a kind of catechism in the pre-Buddhistic religion of the country. The same thing applies to them as to the Kesar saga. The further West we go, the more complete they are. I first observed this particular ceremonial in the village of Stog, which lies opposite Leh. There they were finished with the question-and-answer ritual in the shortest possible time, and the wedding feast constituted the climax of the celebration. In Khalatse, to which I removed from Leh, the question-and-answer game lasted much longer. Since I was unable to understand anything of the content of the songs during the performance, I requested the leader of the Nyo-pa to dictate these questions and answers slowly to the scribe of Khalatse, Ye-shes-rig-adzin. In this way I obtained a copybook of eighteen songs, each in two parts. I went through these carefully with the scribe and soon arrived at an understanding of the first nine. These nine I published in the Indian Antiquary, giving the text, a translation, and annotations. They appeared there under the title, "The Ladakhi Pre-Buddhist Marriage Ritual." Neither the scribe nor I understood the second part of the songs at that time. By now I am somewhat better able to recognize their meaning, and the songs of the second part will also be used in the following presentation. After the song of the Nyo-pa had been delivered to me, one day someone told me that the question-and-answer game of the wedding celebrants was not yet finished with these songs, and that this game was, in fact, continued during the wedding feast. At that time, he said, they sang the so-called chan-glu, the "beer song." Again I had a transcription made of this song, which I published at my own expense by having about fifty copies printed on the missionary lithographic press in Leh. These appeared (with text only) in 1903 under the title, "Die Trinklieder von Khalatse" /The Drinking Songs of Khalatse/. Although several of these songs have very important mythological content, many others are, nevertheless, of a purely diverting nature. They propose riddles such as one might expect on special occasions in gay circles among all peoples. /4/ Of special interest is the song which describes in detail the origin and preparation of Tibetan beer (chan).

585 539 [124] 585 113 539 [273]

19: Asboe M-3 (no date) 1937 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4 Lahul



241 787 before a verdict as to the propitious moment for beginning such occupations is given by the hierarchy, this custom is considerably relaxed in Lahoul, where the community does not pay so much attention to the priestly oracle as do the people living in the more remote valleys of Western Tibet.

*Landmarks.*

423 685 691 Rocks, stones and watercourses serve as landmarks to distinguish between the various farm holdings. When disputes occur, arising out of the removing of rock or stone landmarks, a subordinate in the Government survey department is called in to remeasure the land which is under dispute, and legal proceedings are taken by the offended party.

*Virgin Soil.*

425 When a farmer contemplates cultivating virgin soil, he has first of all to consult the wishes of the community, lest he should infringe the rights of communal pasturage, before negotiating with the Government authorities under whose administration he lives. If the community is agreed that there is no encroachment on the pasturage, a beer drinking party for all concerned is arranged at the expense of the farmer, who may then proceed to acquire the prospective piece of waste land from the Government.

[273]

*Regulation of Water Supply.*

312 624 An adequate supply of water from rivers, glaciers and accumulations of snow is essential in a practically rainless country such as Western Tibet is. Hence the community is most jealous in protecting its rights over such water supply. Two men (Las-pa) are chosen in rotation yearly by the villagers to supervise the communal water supply.

Their duties consist of (1) calling the villagers when the watercourse has to be repaired, (2) collecting beer from each household for the nourishment of about 14 people engaged in the repairs.

In Ladakh the watchers of the water supply are called 'Choo-spon' (lit. Master of the water supply). In cases where there is a communal reservoir for collecting water for the fields, the 'Choo-spons' (usually two or three men) allot the amount of water for each farmstead, and so prevent the possibility of one farmer stealing more water than is his rightful share.

241 312

*Arrangement of Fields.*

Owing to the mountainous nature of the

19‡ Asboe M-3 (no date) 1937 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4
Lahul



476 men or women to assist him in working his fields for a given number of days, he must on a subsequent occasion supply the equivalent in man power when called upon to do so.

*The Farm Servant* (*Len-mi*).

556 The more opulent farmers keep one or more
464 men or women as permanent servants. These
465 are employed from spring until autumn, their remuneration consisting of one piece of homespun cloth sufficient to make an outer garment, board and lodging, and a payment of 12 rupees at the expiration of their period of service. If the servant be a male, his allowance is the same as that given to a woman, with the exception that he receives double that amount of money (*i.e.*, 24 rupees). In some cases, however, the payment is entirely in kind.

233 *Village Shepherds* (*Lug-rdzi*).

[422] Each village employs three shepherds to
464 pasture the communal flocks. These shepherds
621 have, however, to perform subsidiary duties, such as assisting each householder in building or repairing walls round the fields, ploughing and threshing.

When the harvest is gathered in, the shepherds make a house to house collection of barley and buckwheat. In addition to this they receive one fifth of the produce of wool from the communal flocks, which is divided amongst them equally.

*Loans in Grain.*

426 Many of the monastic institutions in Western
792 Tibet are very wealthy and increase their income
241 by negotiating loans of grain to the poorer peasants, taking interest at the rate of five measures for each kal of grain lent (*i.e.*, 10 lb. of grain for every 40 lb. lent, *viz.*, 25 per cent.). The result of this extortionate rate of interest is to put the poor farmer entirely in the hands of the priesthood, and rob him of every chance of increasing his annual output of crops through acquiring new farm implements or improving his land in other ways.

*Manufacture of Beer.*

●273 The consumption of locally brewed beer from barley is very considerable, for at least one third of the annual yield of barley is converted into this liquor. Whilst it is difficult to estimate the
273 exact quantity of barley used for the manufacture
439 of beer, the average would be roughly 20 *kals* of barley per household (800 lb.) This means that the Lahouli has to import large quantities of

19: Asboe M-3 (no date) 1937 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4
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439 grain from Kulu, a neighbouring state. Thus
●273 the wholesale manufacture of beer from locally-grown produce has an economic significance as serious as it is unwise.

*The Care of Livestock.*

231 The people are on the whole kind to their animals and feed them as well as they are able with the limited yield of fodder at their disposal.

From December until April, the heavy snowfall in Lahoul precludes the possibility of grazing cattle. The animals have therefore to be housed on the ground floor of the houses. They are never bedded as in western countries.

When the supply of hay is exhausted the cattle are fed entirely on straw, this being again supplemented in the spring by the bark of willow branches cut and thrown into the pen to be peeled off by the sheep, goats and cows.

The willow tree is extensively cultivated owing to its use both for fodder and fuel.

It is customary for a peasant with more cattle than he can conveniently feed, to hand his surplus livestock to a neighbour to keep and feed from December to April, the price for the cattle thus treated being three rupees per head, and four or

20: Asboe M-3 (no date) 1938 AJ4 West Tibetans AJ4
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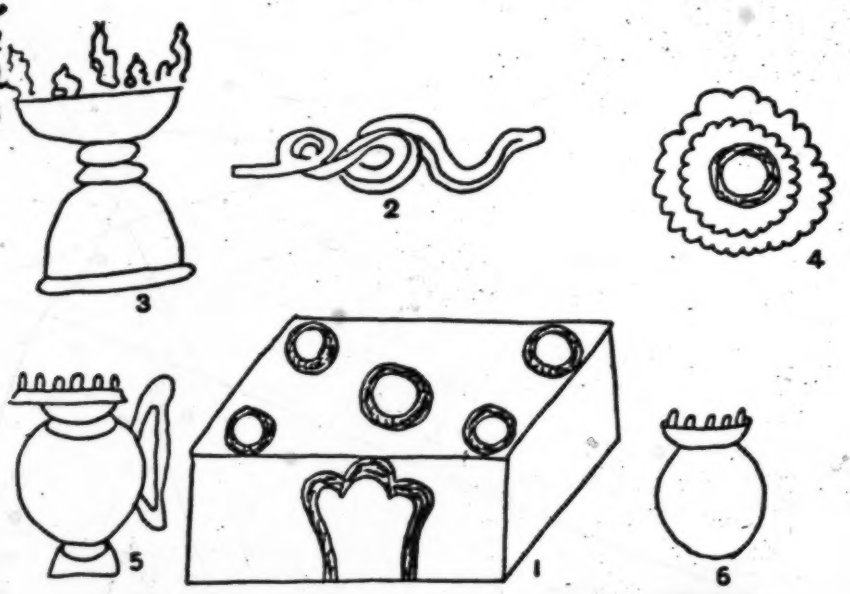
house, whilst a number of them are arranged in a row near the awning of the dwelling.

The members of the household then partake of *Tab-Zan*. This consists of a large dish of parched barley dough in the middle of which a hollow is made to receive the mustard oil which is poured into it. This large cake of dough is




1. *rGya-Tab* (Stove). This is the common earthen stove used by Ladakhis. It is 3 feet square and 1 foot high. In the front there is an aperture for putting in the fuel of sticks and dried manure, and on the top of it there are three holes for placing the cooking utensils. 2. *Dib-Rug*. Sheep's intestines. 3. *Bu-La*. Little lamps made of dough. 4. *Tab-Zan*. Parched barley dough with a hollow in the centre in which mustard oil is poured. 5. *Kal-jor*. Beer pot. 6. *Za-rgyan*. An earthen vessel in which beer is kept. Sometimes used instead of the *Kal-jor*. Both are ornamented with butter pats on special occasions, and also serve as butter offerings.

then divided into four equal parts, one part (*Tab La Rgya-Mo*), being placed on the earth stove (*Tab*) as an offering to the god of the hearth, one part (*Mag-Dung Rgya-Mo*) stuck on a large horizontal beam in the apartment, and one piece (*Sgo-Tag-Rgya-Mo*) stuck on the lintel of the front

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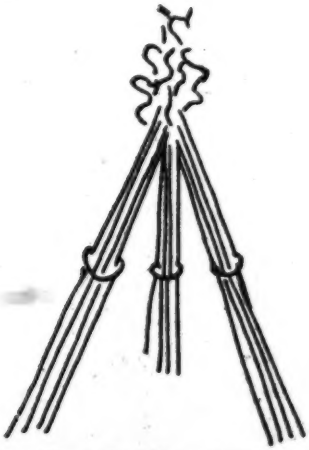
Directly after sunset the *Me-To* (3 bundles of willow and juniper branches) is carried outside each house together with a *Kal-Jor* offering (a pot of beer on the handle of which a butter impression called *Yar* has been made). A small quantity of beer is then sprinkled on the *Me-To*, and small fragments are taken from the *Yar* and smeared on the rims of the drinking cups belonging to the people assembled, and similar butter impressions made on the forehead of each person. The remainder of the beer having been imbibed, all return to their houses.



1. *Me-To.* Three bundles of willow branches kindled at the New Year celebrations.

The little lamps (*Bu-La*) are now lit once again, and all peer from their houses to see if the nobleman of the village (*Lon-Pu*) has kindled his *Me-To* (he having ascertained the propitious moment for performing this operation from the local astrologer (*Rtsi-Pa*). The signal thus given, all emerge, light the *Me-To*, and carry the burning pieces of sticks to a piece of ground contiguous to a main thoroughfare. Throwing the kindled sticks on the ground one man says: *Ra lon ni gon-pa rtsi rug* (a spell against evil spirits) and all reply: *Ha sha la ha sha mi ka khyi ka* (a spell to prevent sickness, dog bite, and other kinds of misfortune).

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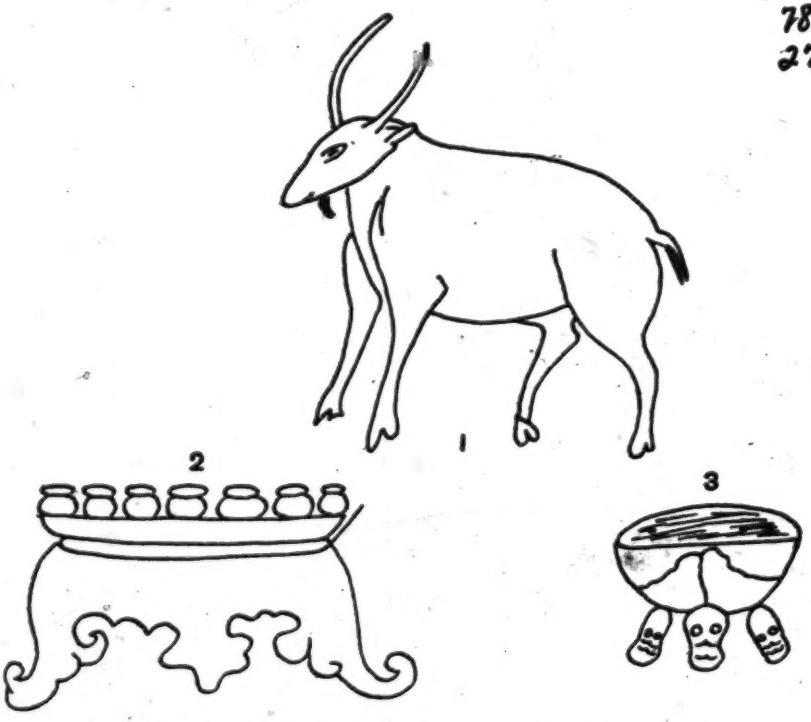
On the 3rd day part of the offerings already mentioned are devoted to the moon with the words: "Happy life, happy new year, happy day, happy stars." In cases where the housewife has not been able to forestall the theft of the offerings by the children, fresh ones must be made and




1. *Skyin*. Dough effigy of an Ibex. (4" long from crest to rump.) 2. *Chu-Pud*. These 7 cups of water used for sacrificial purposes are placed on a table as illustrated. 3. Nangmchod. Vessel of beer made from a human skull. Sometimes the blood of sacrificed animals is placed in this bowl.

offered. The remainder of the *Skyin* and *Pe-Rak* offerings are then distributed to the children, a girl giving the *Pe-Rak* offering to another of her own sex, and a boy bestowing the *Skyin* offering to a male companion. The sport of arrow-shooting (*Da Rgyab-Ches*) is indulged for two days, followed ten days subsequently by one day of this sport.

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273 539 32. (*a*) མ་ཤི་ཚེ་རིང་འདུག་ན་སྲན་མའི་སྲན་ཆང་སྟེར་ཡིན།།

(*b*) mashi'tbse ring'dugna shran'mä shran'chang ster'rin.

(*c*) In the time I live, not die [before I shall die] I shall give you a beer of peas.

(*d*) A threat. Before my death I shall find some opportunity to give you a severe beating. The beer of peas is said to be of a very bad taste.

ooo (*e*) *Mashithsering* is a *Compos. adverb.* and *copulat.*

593 539 33. (*a*) མ་བུ་གྲབས་མཐུན་ཆ་ན། ཚལ་རྒོ་ཆོད་མས་ཆོད།།

(*b*) ma'bu drabs'thun cha'na
thsalrgo thsod'mä chod'.

(*c*) If mother and daughter agree in their counsel, breakfast may pass off well with vegetables [only].

(*d*) Much displeasure can be avoided by talking over a thing, before doing it.

ooo (*e*) *Mabu* is *Compos. copulat. drabsthun comp. determin.*

539 34. (*a*) བསམ་པ་སྔོན་ལ་མ་བདང་ན།
འཇོད་པ་དེང་ན་ཡོང་འདུག།

(*b*) sam'ba ngon'la matang'na
gyod'pa sting'na yong'dug.

(*c*) If you do not give thought first, repentance will come afterwards.

577 793 539 35. (*a*) བོང་དུའི་ནམ་ཆོག་ལ་སེར་ན་ཀྱག་ན། ཡང་ནག་པ་ན་ཚུག་ན། ཚོགས་ཡིན།།

(*b*) bon'gui nam'chogla ser'lugna yangnathal'ba lugna, tsogs'in.

(*c*) It is all the same whether you pour gold in the ear of a donkey or dust.

(*d*) Excuse of the lamas, when asked, why they do not teach the people.

ooo (*e*) In *namchog* as in many other words the silent letter of the second syllable is pronounced with the first.

539 36. (*a*) སྔན་མ་སྐག་བརྒྱབ་ན། རྗེང་མ་དགོད་མ་ཤོར།།

(*b*) ngan'ma rgag'gyab'na, sting'ma rgod' ma shor'.

(*c*) When the man who walks first, stumbles, the man following behind, must not laugh.

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595 428 he belongs to her, not she to him, as she would in the regular, fraternal polyandry of the *bag-ma* marriage. The heiress's children take her name, and her bridegroom is really nothing more than the man she has chosen to enable her to have the children she needs to hand down the property she has inherited undivided. A *mag-pa* or *mag-pas* can be turned out [586] by their wife without her having any obligation to compensate them; in such cases, the woman does, however, usually give the poor man a sheep or a few rupees as a parting present. Even if there are children of the union, the *mag-pa* or *mag-pas* can be dismissed, it being considered that he or they have fulfilled their mission and are no longer of any use. Offspring remain with the house, namely in this case, with the mother.

428 597 In the rare cases where there are no direct heirs, male or female, household property and family name go to the most closely related member of some related branch, with a preference for the paternal side if possible. But usually even this is avoided by the adoption of an heir, such being the preoccupation of the Lahulis with keeping the property undivided and with handing down the family name.

585 [595] [601] On the 1st July 1938, Wazir Thakur Partap Chand took me to Gumling village to see a *bag-ma* wedding in the Tolag-pa house. It will be seen in the genealogy of the Karpa house given in Table 26, that Tseten, eldest of the four sons of Namgyal Karpa, after having been part of a polyandrous marriage with his three brothers, left them when their common wife died to become a *mag-pa in* the Tolag-pa House of Gumling. He had had four boys and two girls, and it was to the wedding of these four sons of Tseten that my wife and I were now invited.

On arrival at the house, Tseten received us, flanked by a young woman [203] beautifully dressed in coloured silks with a white scarf over her shoulders and a magnificent turquoise crown on her head, who immediately offered us *chang* (local barley beer) to drink, in spite of the early hour (it was seven a.m.). All the way from Kyelang to Gumling, only [564] half an hour's ride, we had been preceded by a member of the smith [533] caste, a Gara, who drummed away loudly on a kettle-shaped instrument to do us honour and announce our arrival. He now stopped beating it and went into the house with us to join others like himself who, today, on this festive occasion, constituted the band.

With the Wazir, we were taken up to a guest room where we were invited to sit cross-legged on the floor and plied with tea and more *chang*. Once we had been through this ritual of polite reception, we were taken up onto the roof of the house where a carpet had been put

[Text Continues on p. 318]

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figures connected with getting rid of evil spirits. The second monk carried a *drilbu* (*dril-bu*) or bell, and a *dorje* (*rDorJe*) or *vajra* thunderbolt, those ubiquitous instruments of Tibetan lamaist ritual. The third one carried a plate full of glowing charcoal embers.

On reaching the sobbing bride and the woman over whose knee she was bent, the priests lit the candle of the *tsa-sum* and dropped powdered incense onto the burning coals. The plate containing these, now smoking copiously, was placed below the girl's dress so as to fumigate her from below of any evil that she might have brought with her. The *tsa-sum* was passed repeatedly and slowly over her, clockwise, to the accompaniment of muttered prayers, and then thrown away over a nearby hedge with much whistling and shouting from the onlookers and even the sound of a shot being fired somewhere close to the house. Thakur Partap Chand explained that the *tsa-sum*, loaded with the evil which the girl had brought with her and which had been chased out of her by the fumes and smoke from the charcoal, had now been thrown away; a gun had been fired to kill the devils who were trying to escape, while the object of the shouting and whistling by the onlookers was to frighten away those devils who had not been hit.

Once all this was finished, the *Nya-opa* put shoes on the bride, who had arrived without any. She struggled and protested against this action, saying, as she traditionally should, that she did not want them. Ornaments were next placed on her while she made further protests, refusing to change her posture which was still that of lying prostrate over her woman companion's knee. The girl in the elaborate dress who had offered us *chang* when we arrived, then came out and gave a drink of the beer to each of the men. She poured it into their palms, from which they drank, and then went over to the bride to do the same. I was surprised to see the latter lap it up without making any fuss.

After this, the *Na-tri-pa* picked the bride up again and carried her into the house. As I wanted to see what was going to happen now, we left the roof from where we had been watching up to this point, and climbed down the steps to the main room, on the ground floor of the house, into which the bundle which still constituted the bride was being carried. We got there just a few seconds ahead of her, and sat down quickly at the far end in front of the window, next to the three lamas who had also settled down. Sketch 1, below, is a rough plan of our respective positions.

To our left, two of the bridegrooms, seated cross-legged on the floor, awaited their future spouse. A couple of them sufficed, it seemed, the

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floor, than small lamps on every pillar in the room were lit and gave us all the light we needed to follow the next part of the ceremony.

A man called the *La-btag-pa* (*La-bTag-pa*) now came forward with a large branch of juniper in his hand. He set fire to it from one of the lamps and with a knife, which he held in the other hand, he cut a piece out of the conical *tsampa* cake and offered it loudly to a god whom he called Tangyer of Kior. The Wazir told me afterwards that the latter was the name of a neighbouring village really called Piukar, while the god's actual appellation was Kularapa. It was never done, however, to call upon him and his village openly by their real name, and thus they were both called upon in the way which I heard.

The same *La-btag-pa* then took what remained of the cake and offered it to the bride and bridegrooms. A shout went up from the crowd looking on and we heard that this was the crucial moment when they became husbands and wife. The cake was presented cross-armed by the officiator, that is to say, after he had got rid of the burning juniper branch (which was thrown out of the window), he took one large slice in each hand and, facing the wedding party, offered what he had in his right hand to the men, and the contents of the left to the girl. Everybody watched to see how the pieces would be taken. If they are snatched, it means that the partners are very much in love. If the woman takes her piece slowly, reluctantly, it means that she is in love with someone else. Should the cake be refused and the slices returned, this means that the marriage is refused. In this case, they seemed to accept the proffered food quite naturally, without either snatching or hesitating, so that everyone present shouted their approval.

After that, *chang* was passed to the assembled company, beginning with the two bridegrooms. When it reached us, the Thakur told me that the ceremony was finished and that we could go. As we went out, leaving our guide to remain and enjoy the fun, I noticed that the Garas started beating their drums again; they had been silent since the bride had been carried into the main room to be formally wed. We were cordially invited to return the next day, as we were told that rejoicings would go on now for another two days and two nights.

In the morning, on July 2nd 1938, we returned to Tolag-pa house, to continue our experience of a Lahuli polyandrous wedding. Thakur Partap Chand again accompanied us, and from him I heard what had happened after our departure the day before, and during the night.

It seemed that the bride had retired at about 11.30 p.m., with the women who helped her to undress. The bridegrooms remained with the

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585 men for another half hour and, on the stroke of midnight, they went up to the bridal chamber where the eldest brother was put to bed in another bed than the one in which his bride was already lying. This is the usual custom, I was assured, when the couple is not notoriously in love, and parents have arranged the match. They could sleep in the same bed together if it were otherwise. An old woman was left in the room all night to watch over them and see how they behaved, and this appeared to be an indication that the young people had, nevertheless, had a word to say in the choice of whom they would marry, because if they had not and the parents alone had arranged everything, two men and two women would have been on guard all night.

Thakur Partap Chand assured me that newly married couples never consummate the marriage on the first night; they only have physical relations with one another on their wedding day if they have had some before. Intercourse between husband and wife may not take place until a week later, I heard (I must say with some incredulity), or sometimes until after a month or even one year. The only explanation that I could find for such a curious statement was that perhaps in the case of arranged marriages, the partners are not keen to know each other, and postpone this duty as long as they can. But I cannot believe that so much delay is observed in the case of newly married couples who have voluntarily chosen each other.

In the early morning, the women fetched the bride out and, having dressed her in all her finery, brought her down to the main room again. The bridegroom and his brother were likewise taken down, adorned in their best clothes by their male friends and relatives. We found them sitting in state in the reception room where they had been seated during the wedding, but with the bride now relaxed and upright, and all the other paraphernalia removed – except the *chang* cauldrons.

[293] From the latter, an ample supply was served to the guests, together with tea. We were continually being pressed to drink, and after sipping our cups a few times, got tired of it and left the room. I took advantage of this to question the Thakur as to who the other people in the room were. He told me that they were relatives and friends of the bridegrooms' family. The bride was not represented, he assured me, because it was very rare that members of the bride's family should attend her wedding, never if they did not approve of the match. If their consent [584] has been obtained, they must first receive some assurance that their daughter will receive enough revenue from the land of her future husbands to satisfy them before they consent to appear. They will then do

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so, but always two days later, and when they make their appearance, everyone on the bridegrooms' side is very polite to them, for they protest against the violent way in which their daughter has been abducted, in accordance with the best traditions. 585

We went off to lunch after that, and on returning in the afternoon, visited the private chapel of the house, the *lha-k'hang* (*lha-k'hang*), where the three lamas were busy preparing offerings which still had to be made to the gods so that the wedding should be auspicious. They had consulted the scriptures, they told us, and the things which we could see on the altar were those that they considered appropriate for this occasion. Before a large statue of Buddha, together with the usual presentations of water, grain and *tsampa* moulded *tormas* (*gTor-ma*) or dough figures, there were a leg of mutton, the arrow with the streamers to it, standing in a box of grain, which we had seen in front of the senior bridegroom at the ceremony of the previous day, and a platter upon which stood the large figure of a stag also moulded in dough, with twelve points to its antlers, surrounded by small, coloured flags and two *dos* (*mDos*) or string-cross traps for evil spirits. The lamas were most obliging and pleasant, and although we interrupted their devotions, took great pains to show us everything. They told us that the stag would be thrown away and burned before the wedding festivities had come to an end. 585 782 [789]

Next, we went up onto the roof again, attracted there by various curious visitors from Tibet who had stopped off on their way south to see what was going on in the Tolag-pa house. There we found a space filled with a lot of men from the party, sitting round the wall, while in the centre, before them, huge cauldrons of *chang* were being prepared. Upon asking, I was given to understand that the bride was shortly coming up to give flowers to each of the men in exchange for small coins which they would give her for good luck. The *chang*-girl, whom we knew from the first day, was there distributing the alcoholic beverage to all in turn, still dressed in all her finery. Below this space on the roof, I heard that there was another room for tea drinkers, and that a similar ceremony would take place there, too. 585 273

The bride did come up soon after that, and she duly distributed flowers and received money in exchange. Everybody then got very drunk on the *chang* until the lamas came out with the stag offering and threw it away into a specially built bonfire below the house, while everyone hissed loudly at the devils which were being thus destroyed. Dancing followed, the men nearly all reeling drunk, but then I was told that for [789]

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585 a marriage to be auspicious, it was essential that as many of the guests
273 as possible became intoxicated.

Mutton, rice and curry were distributed to all, and while the dancing went on, many laid themselves down to sleep. The lamas came up onto the roof and recited prayers for all. More *chang* was distributed by the girl, and everyone drank six cups at least. Each time that this took place or somebody got up to dance, the Garas would beat their drums to encourage revelry. Occasionally, they even rattled off tunes, which I was told meant "drink more". The lamas who were also drinking quite a lot, became very religious in this atmosphere, and kept on springing to their feet to bless the guests, the food, the crops and even the sheep belonging to the house, and which could be seen in the fields below.

585 Only the women would not join in the dance and needed much persuasion. Prem Chand, the Thakur's cousin, joined me in trying to get them to perform, and when eventually the older ladies of the house of Karpa (among them Tseten's mother) started a few steps, they all came along and joined in the fun. It was getting late now, and the sun was setting. The bridegrooms wandered about freely in the crowd during all this time, as did even the two younger ones who had not taken part in the ceremony.

As we broke up and went home that evening, we heard that the bride was down stairs in the reception room with the other women of the house. In twelve days, she would be going back to her parents' house, where she [591] would stay one month in accordance with Lahuli custom. She would only return to her new home after that time, bringing all her belongings with her and settling down for good in the house of her husbands.

We stayed another three weeks in Lahul, and during this time I had a number of opportunities to gather further data about the polyandrous [115] people of the Bhaga valley. The Wazir, Thakur Partap Chand, accompanied me everywhere, and for this reason, as well as because he spoke English, he was my principal source of information.

423 Thus, Partap Chand told me that in *Khalsa kothi* holdings of poly-
428 androus families, property may belong to the house, that is, to the broth-
595 ers who own the land jointly and without division, but fields are nevertheless divided up among them, so that each of them receives his own private revenue. Bad patches are distributed first among the brothers of a household, and then the good pieces of land. Women can also re- [584] ceive the revenue of fields put aside for them, and it is on this point that a bride's relatives have to be satisfied before they will agree to their *daughter being "stolen" from them.*

1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir
W. Tibetan AS 4



The universal food of the people is barley-meal, made from grim; it is either made into a broth and drunk warm, or else into a sort of dough and eaten with butter-milk if that can be got. They generally have three meals; one an hour or two after sunrise, of the barley-broth; one at mid-day, of the dough; a third after sunset, of the broth again. In this way they consume some two pounds' weight of meal a day. To the broth they put any addition they can get; sometimes it is vegetable, sometimes meat, and sometimes tea.

Unlike the natives of India, the Ladākhīs are not particular as to their feeding. They obey few restrictions as to what to eat or how to eat it, or as to the method of slaughtering. One way they have of killing an animal for food is to tie up the mouth and let it be suffocated. Another practice of theirs (I am not sure that it is common) is to drain the blood of the animal into their broth and warm all up together.

The drink of the Ladākhīs is *chang*, a light beer made without hops.* They have no good vessels to keep it in, so it usually is sour by the time it is drunk. As I have drunk it, it tasted like a cross between home-brewed beer and farmhouse cider; it is not a bad beverage on a warm day, but these people will enjoy it in the depth of a severe winter. There is also a spirit sometimes made—a whisky, but this is proscribed by law. Through the Maharaja's territories generally the making and the drinking of intoxicating liquors is forbidden †; at one time an order was made that in accordance with this rule the drinking of chang should be put down; but on the representations of the Ladākhīs that it had been the beverage of their nation from time immemorial, and that it would be impossible to endure the cold of their climate without it, they were allowed the malt-liquor; the restriction as to the spirit however remains. Tea is another favourite drink in this country, but the poor people—that is nearly all the population—seldom are able to afford it; it is made in a churn, with butter added.

* For the better brews a plant brought from Baltistān is used in the same way and with somewhat the same effects as are hops in our beer.

† Christians are specially exempted from the operation of this law.